

Guidelines for State Employee Travelers



Office of
General Services

Business
Services Center

For travel questions, contact:

Business Services Center, Travel Unit
(518) 457-4272
Email: OGSTravel.Unit@ogs.ny.gov
Website: <http://bsc.ogs.ny.gov/>

For Citibank Corporate Card Chip and Pin questions visit: https://www.bsc.ogs.ny.gov/sites/default/files/ChipPIN_FAQ_for_Cardholders.pdf

When registering your travel card, please use the following BILLING address:

1220 Washington Ave.
Building 5, Floor 6
Albany, NY 12226-1900

General Travel Guidelines

1. Travel expenses will be reimbursed for actual, reasonable, and necessary expenses incurred by an employee while in travel status on official state business. Reimbursement will be in accordance with established OSC travel guidelines located at: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/travel/travel.htm>.
2. Employees should utilize the New York State Procurement (NYSPRO) statewide travel contracts for travel agent services, lodging, rental vehicles, and air travel. The travel contracts are available at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/Trav/default.asp>.
3. Employees are in travel status when they are traveling 35 or more miles from both their home and official station.
4. All employees should know their assigned official station.
5. Lunch is not a reimbursable expense.
6. Lodging and car rentals are tax exempt in New York State. Travelers should always have tax exempt certificates with them in case they are needed: ST-129 Tax Exempt Certificate for Lodging, and AC-946 Tax Exempt Form for other expenses/car rentals. These forms are on the BSC website located at: <http://bsc.ogs.ny.gov/>.

Travel Card

- o The Visa Travel Card is used only for official State business travel expenses.
- o Apply for a Travel Card through your agency's travel liaison.
- o Travel cards should be used for all state-related travel purchases (airfare, lodging, rental cars, Amtrak, etc.).
- o Do not charge personal expenses or other travelers' expenses to your travel card.
- o Register for the Citidirect card management system (website below) to review statements and track charges online.
- o Report lost/stolen cards or unauthorized charges to the Citibank Member Center number below.

Citibank Member Center
1.800.248.4553 o <https://home.cards.citidirect.com>
BSC Credit Card Administrator
(518) 457-4272 o CreditCard@ogs.ny.gov

Meals and Lodging Expenses

Employees must be in travel status to be eligible for reimbursement of meal and lodging expenses.

Method 1 - No receipts are required

A set per diem allowance for meals, lodging and incidentals, regardless of where lodging was obtained.

Method 2 - Receipts required

- o Reimbursement of actual lodging costs up to a specific maximum amount and an allowance for meals based on the location of lodging.
- o All lodging receipts and all meal/incidentals receipts for charges placed on travel card are required.
- o Per diem rates are available at the US General Services Administration (GSA) website at:
o <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

Meal Rates without Receipts for Day Trips (all locations)

- o Day trip meals are set at a fixed rate and reported as taxable income.
- o Breakfast - \$5.00 reimbursement when departing one or more hours prior to the start of your normal work shift.
- o Dinner - \$12.00 reimbursement when returning two or more hours after the end of their normal work shift.
- o Departure/arrival times must be entered on the expense report (details of the meal expense line, comments, or general information) to be eligible for day trip meal reimbursement.

Receipts

Receipts are required for the following:

- o All travel card transactions
- o Common Carrier - e.g., train, bus, airplane (airfare must be purchased on the travel card with contracted vendor)
- o Method II Lodging
- o Overnight travel meals placed on travel card
- o Tolls/Parking
- o Metro Cards/Long Island Railroad
- o Vehicle Rentals/EZ Pass for Rentals/Gas
- o Taxis, Miscellaneous and Incidental Expenses
- o Day trip meals claiming higher receipted Method II

Transportation and Expenses

Travel should be by the most economical method possible and in the best interest of the State. When determining the method of travel, consider the distance, travel time, number of travelers, and modes of transportation available.

Rental Vehicles

- o Vehicles are rented when a state vehicle is not available and it is less costly than using a personal vehicle.

- o Use the state contracted rental agencies and charge to state-issued Travel Card. Review contract information and price lists at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7200122273can.htm>.
- o Contract ID # - XZ24A19 is to be given to Enterprise Rent-A-Car and National Car Rental at time of reservation to receive benefits under the NYS Program.
- o Corporate Discount # (CDN) 65909 is to be given to Hertz at time of reservation to receive benefits under the NYS Program.
- o Always rent in the name of New York State.
- o Indicate all drivers and use form AC-946 for tax exemption.
- o Do not purchase additional insurance or road side assistance if using the state-contracted vendors.
- o Do not purchase Plate Pass toll program (additional costs incurred for program).
- o Consider geographic surcharges when determining which contracted rental agency to use.
- o Return vehicles with the same amount of fuel as departure.

Personal Owned Vehicles (POV)

- o If opting to use a POV instead of a rental vehicle, reimbursement will be the lesser of the rental rate or Personal Car Mileage rate (PCM) determined by the OGS Trip Calculator located at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/Trav/Calculators.asp>.
- o The OGS Trip Calculator must be attached to expense reports when estimated mileage of the trip is over 100 miles.
- o Include trip details for each stop, street/city/state.

Accidents

- o All accidents should be reported to the local law enforcement agency and the employee's supervisor.
- o Accidents with a state vehicle should be reported to the OGS Bureau of Risk, Insurance & Fleet Management (BRIFM), per its accident reporting procedures and to the state-contracted vehicle maintenance provider, if applicable for the agency. Drivers must also complete the MV-104 Accident Report. BRIFM accident reporting procedures. This form can be found at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/RIFM/ARP.asp>.
- o Accidents in a rental vehicle must be immediately reported to the rental agency and Citibank (1-866-390-9735, www.eclaimsline.com), if applicable.

Taxi Fares/Expenses to a Transportation Terminal

Reasonable and necessary taxi fees will be reimbursed, customary tipping will be allowed. Actual costs will be reimbursed for taxi or other common carriers between an employee's residence and transportation terminal or for personal car mileage. Receipts are required for transportation expenses.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Telephone Charges: Only telephone charges for official state business may be reimbursed. Business calls should be indicated on your report.

Personal Expenses: Personal expenses, such as laundry, valet service, movie rentals, maids, or entertainment are not reimbursable.

Conferences and Seminars

- o All state-sponsored conferences and seminars should be held at facilities that honor federal per diem rates.
- o If the lodging rate exceeds the maximum per diem rate, most likely for non-state conferences, prior approval is required from the agency's finance office.
- o If the conference registration fee includes meals, meals should not be claimed separately.
- o Registration fees can be paid by personal credit card or travel card. These charges must be submitted on the SFS expense report.
- o The conference registration and agenda should be included with your expense report.

Filing a SFS Expense Report

- o A SFS expense report is required for all travel and expense reimbursement requests.
- o Expense reports should be submitted within 30 days of travel.
- o Scan and attach all required receipts and documentation to your SFS expense report.

Top 10 Tips for Expense Report Approval

1. Obtain all travel approvals prior to trip; if the total expenses for the trip are \$500 or more, include DOB B-1184 number on expense report.
2. Ensure the General Information Box in expense report is completely filled out including start/end times, official station, dates of travel, etc.
3. If claiming day trip meals or overnight extra meals, click on the details link in expense report and fill in the start and end times.
4. When purchasing meals with your travel card, change the expense type in My Wallet to "Return to State" before bringing the transaction into the expense report.
5. Overnight meal per diem claims must match the overnight dates on the lodging receipt.
6. If multiple charges other than lodging are included on the receipt, expenses must be itemized on expense report.
7. It usually costs less if the traveler refuels the rental vehicle before returning it. If the vehicle is refueled by the rental agency, the fuel charges must be split from the rental charge in your expense report.
8. Before submitting an expense report, wait until all travel card charges and credits pertaining to a specific trip are My Wallet.
9. Attach all required receipts, approvals, justifications for upgrades/over the max rate for lodging, waivers, etc. to an expense report before submitting it. Provide an explanation for anything unusual.
10. For any personal car mileage claims over 100 miles per trip, complete the OGS Trip Calculator found at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/Trav/Calculators.asp>. When a rental is less costly, the trip calculator adjusts the mileage to equal the lower cost of the vehicle rental. In your SFS expense report, enter the reduced mileage as "mileage-automobile" expense, or enter the rental cost dollar amount as "mileage-alternate rate" expense. The completed OGS Trip Calculator must be attached to your expense report in SFS.